

Book tailored for older job-hunters

By one estimate, more than 18 million people looking for jobs these days are over age 50.

Just out is a new book tailored for this growing segment of older job-hunters.

The book is expensive compared with other job-hunting handbooks, but it has an edge: It was written by a man who looked for work not once, but twice after celebrating his 50th birthday.

"Getting a Job After 50," by John S. Morgan, has many of the same elements as the dozens of other self-help books on the market today that try to enlighten and enliven us about job-hunting. But Morgan's prescriptions are tailored for the senior job-hunter, and they are uniquely combined with theory, wit, tough talk and compassion.

Here are some of the ways that Morgan targets the book to the over-50 audience:

■ It opens with an introduction to positive thinking for the older job-hunter. The section on self-confidence focuses on the economic clout of people over 50. And the



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section on creativity tells you that age, with its experience, is truly a resource when it comes to the innovative skills that employers are demanding today to stay competitive.

■ Age discrimination is frankly discussed, along with the laws that are supposed to protect against it but rarely do. Morgan arms the senior job-hunter with tips, facts and myth-busters to help combat prejudices and misconceptions of the youth-oriented work world.

■ The book contains some good clear thinking about "When the Ax Falls" and you find yourself fired in mid-life or forced to retire. Several chapters help you decide exactly what type of job you want, or whether you're cut out to go into business for yourself. As the author says, knowing what you want is the

first step to getting it, and he helps you ask the right questions so you can find the right direction for you.

■ Job-hunting skills get a complete workover, too. Included are tips about interviews, which are often the hardest part of the job hunt. Hints include listening skills to focus upon, sample questions you may be asked or you may want to ask, legal and illegal questions, and how to make a good impression.

■ The last section of the book helps you deal with the feelings of being a senior in a new job. It includes Morgan's 10 guiding principles, which will help you deal with the new job — or a new job hunt, if you should find yourself faced with the problem all over again.

Throughout the book, the author uses dozens of examples of mature workers who regretted their decisions to retire or were faced with the stigma and boredom of unwanted retirement. By including these examples, he's personalized the book and made the lessons very effective.

The author also spends 25 pages

on how to create your own job with a new employer. This is very important because it can help you "own" a position and really feel comfortable and productive in it.

But "Getting a Job After 50" has one serious drawback: its price, \$27.95. Unfortunately, the publisher, Petrocelli Books Inc. of Princeton, N.J., doesn't print a soft-cover version. I have difficulty recommending such a costly volume to people who may be strapped for cash, especially since so many excellent, less costly books are available about job hunting.

The bottom line: "Getting a Job After 50" is a good, specialized volume on job-hunting for older workers.

But if you're out of work, I'd suggest you try checking it out of the library, borrowing it or using other less expensive resources.

Hillel Segal's column has been broadened to include evaluations of gadgets, seminars and books designed to enhance business productivity. Segal is a management consultant based in Boulder.